



# State Of Montana

  

## Commissioner of

  

## Political Practices

  

## Biennial Report

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**STATE OF MONTANA**

**FOR FY2010**

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Template provided by  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES DIVISION

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>SECTION 1: AGENCY IT PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS – GOALS &amp; OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>1.1 Goals (Taken from 2008 plan and 2009 update).....</i>	<i>1</i>
<b>SECTION 2: IT INITIATIVES STATUS UPDATE.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<i>2.1 IT Initiatives (Taken from 2008 plan and 2009 update).....</i>	<i>2</i>



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Benefits the agency has been working to achieve since 2003 aren't likely to be achieved. (See Benefits, Goal 2.) While there's been added convenience for some users, a majority still file their required campaign reports on paper and will continue to do so. Efficiency of the program has been reduced – agency staff must now support two systems, with the new system being problematic. While a number of other services have been successfully launched, the overall goal of improving public disclosure through searchable, sortable, downloadable campaign data – the nationally recognized standard – will very likely not be achieved with the current system and level of support.

## SECTION 1: AGENCY IT PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS – GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### 1.1 Goals

#### *Goal Number 1: (taken from 2008 plan and 2009 update)*

**ITG 1** Complete planned on-line campaign reporting systems

**Description:** Political campaign financial disclosure responsibilities are met primarily with paper filing of the required periodic statements. The Commissioner's office has been working toward an electronic filing service and related public search service.

**Benefits:** Provision of an on-line service for registration and financial reporting has added a measure of convenience for some candidates. Eventually, a similar service will be added for political committees.

**Which state strategic goal or objective does your goal address?** Objective 2-5, expansion of eGovernment services.

#### **Supporting Objective/Action**

**ITO 1-1** Complete the political committee reporting service as soon as possible so that work can begin on enhancements to the services in response to the priority needs that have been identified.

**Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50 %):** Substantial time and effort has been spent documenting business processes, defining needed changes, and testing revisions in order to stabilize the candidate reporting service, which was launched early in 2010. Testing is nearly complete. Once the tested revisions have been made, they can then be implemented and tested on the committee side of the service. Our goal to launch the committee service for the 2010 campaign system was not met. In that sense, very little was accomplished toward meeting the goal. We've nearly completed two steps forward after having taken two steps back.

**Status:** on-going

## ***Goal Number 2: (taken from 2008 plan and 2009 update)***

**ITG 2** Upgrade services to achieve ease-of-use and an attractiveness that lends itself to making these systems mandatory for political campaigns

**Description:** These systems will not achieve a positive benefit to cost ratio until they're used by the majority of candidates and committees. Experience across the country shows that won't happen until use is made mandatory. Realizing that the users (candidates) must support that notion through a legislative vote, it's essential that the systems be attractive and easy to use.

**Benefits:** Citizens will benefit by having improved disclosure of state and local political activity. Taxpayers will benefit from the savings resulting from modern business processes, replacing outdated manual processes. CPP staff will benefit from time freed up to spend on work that's more productive in meeting our overall mission.

**Which state strategic goal(s) and/or objective(s) does your goal address?** Objective 2-5, expansion of eGovernment services.

### **Supporting Objective/Action**

**ITO 2-1** Complete the committee service so that work can begin on enhancements.

**Accomplishments:** A list of priority enhancements has been identified and an assessment has been written that describes problems that will remain.

**Status:** Delayed due to problems in production with the sister service, candidate reporting. Work on the committee service is expected to begin soon.

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## ***2.1 IT Initiatives (Taken from 2008 plan and 2009 update)***

**Initiative 1 - Title:** None

**Description:** Since the initiative presented to the 2009 Legislature was rejected and another tight budget year is expected, no new initiative is being proposed.

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**3** No additional information provided.

***More information is available on request.***